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KNICKS GO MADE 2-5 FAVORITE FOR GRADE III, \$400,000 LUKAS CLASSIC

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Thursday, Sept. 30, 2021) – Korea Racing Authority's **Knicks Go**, the top-ranked horse in the NTRA Top Thoroughbred Poll after convincing wins in this year's Pegasus World Cup (GI) at Gulfstream Park and Whitney (GI) at Saratoga, was made the overwhelming 2-5 morning line favorite in Saturday's \$400,000 Lukas Classic (Grade III) at Churchill Downs – his final test before tackling the \$6 million Breeders' Cup Classic (GI) on Nov. 6 at Del Mar.

"He's a horse that puts a lot into his training and he's done that leading into Saturday's race," trainer **Brad Cox** said. "He's accomplished a lot this year and we believe the Lukas Classic is a good race to compete in prior to the Breeders' Cup. This race doesn't require him to ship and he can run out of his own stall."

Knicks Go (22-8-3-1—\$5,368,995) had a strong 1 1/2-mile gallop early Thursday morning prior to schooling in the paddock at 10 a.m. The Maryland-bred competed four times at Churchill Downs while under the care of trainer **Ben Colebrook** but has not recorded victory beneath the Twin Spires.

Knicks Go is scheduled to face five rivals in the 1 1/8-mile Lukas Classic including **Juddmonte's** multiple graded stakes winning homebred **Tacitus**. The gray son of Tapit arrived to trainer **Bill Mott's** Churchill Downs base earlier in the week from Saratoga. Saturday's race will be the first time **Tacitus** has competed since finishing seventh in the \$20 million Saudi Cup (GI) in February.

The Lukas Classic is carded as the eighth race on Saturday's 11-race program. First post is 12:45 p.m. (all times Eastern) and the Lukas Classic will go at 4:22 p.m. Named after Hall of Fame trainer **D. Wayne Lukas**, the race shares the Saturday spotlight with the \$300,000 Ack Ack (GIII), which goes as Race 10 at 5:26 p.m.

The complete field for the Lukas Classic from the rail out (with jockey, trainer and morning line odds): New Orleans Classic (GII) winner **Chess Chief** (James Graham, Dallas Stewart, 20-1); **Knicks Go** (Joel Rosario, Cox, 2-5); \$3.7 million earner **Tacitus** (Jose Lezcano, Mott, 5-2); multiple stakes winner **Shared Sense** (Brian Hernandez Jr., Cox, 15-1); Pegasus World Cup third **Independence Hall** (Javier Castellano, Michael McCarthy, 10-1); and West Virginia Governor's (GIII) winner **Sprawl** (Joe Talamo, Tommy Drury Jr., 12-1).

Wagering is available on www.TwinSpires.com, the official ADW of Churchill Downs Incorporated and its family of racetracks.

BEAU LIAM POISED TO KEEP UNBEATEN STREAK IN TACT AS 3-1 ACK ACK FAVORITE – **Stonestreet Stables'** undefeated homebred colt **Beau Liam** was made the slight 3-1 morning line favorite against 10 rivals that entered Saturday's 29th running of the \$300,000 Ack Ack (Grade III) at Churchill Downs.

Trained by Hall of Famer **Steve Asmussen**, **Beau Liam** (3-3-0-0—\$171,888) is the least experienced horse in the Ack Ack with only three prior starts. The other 10 rivals in the race have made an average of 17 lifetime starts. **Beau Liam** drew post No. 10 for Saturday's one-mile event, his stakes debut. Jockey **Brian Hernandez Jr.** will be filling in to ride the speedy son of **Liam's Map** for regular rider **Ricardo Santana Jr.**, who will ride **Gunite** in the \$500,000 Champagne (GI) at New York's Belmont Park for Asmussen.

Beau Liam returned to Churchill Downs from Saratoga a week ago and recorded an easy half-mile move Monday in :49.20. He also schooled in the paddock Thursday morning.

Here is the complete field for the Ack Ack (with jockey, trainer and morning line odds): **Exculpatory** (Carol Cedeno, Mark Reid, 10-1); **Mo Mosa** (Jose Lezcano, Mike Maker, 12-1); **Guest Suite** (Emmanuel Esquivel, Cipriano Contreras, 15-1); **Ebben** (Francisco Arrieta, Steve Margolis, 15-1); **Mr Dumas** (Reylu Gutierrez, John Ortiz, 12-1); **Aloha West** (Corey Lanerie, Wayne Catalano, 7-2); **Plainsman** (Joel Rosario, Brad Cox, 6-1); **Atoka** (Rafael Bejarano, D. Wayne Lukas, 15-1); **South Bend** (James Graham, Bill Mott, 12-1); **Beau Liam** (Hernandez, Asmussen, 3-1); and **Rushie** (Javier Castellano, Michael McCarthy, 4-1).

The Ack Ack serves as a prep for the \$1 million Breeders' Cup Dirt Mile (GI) at Del Mar on Nov. 6.

MEET LEADERS – With four days remaining in the September Meet, **Tyler Gaffalione** held a slim lead over **Brian Hernandez Jr.** in the jockey standings 11-10 wins. **Joe Talamo** was in third with six wins. ... Hernandez won with 8 of his 27 mounts last week for a 30% win-clip. ... **Kenny McPeck** had a 6-4 win lead in the trainer standings over **Steve Asmussen** after winning with five of his nine starters last week. ... **WinStar Farm and Siena Farm** held the top spot in the owner standings with three victories.

TV SCHEDULE – Churchill Downs races are scheduled to air this week on “America’s Day at the Races” on the Fox Sports family of networks. Here is the broadcast schedule:

Thursday: 2:30-8 p.m.; Fox Sports 2
Friday: 12:30-5:30 p.m.; Fox Sports 2
Saturday: 12:30-6:30 p.m.; Fox Sports 2
Sunday: 12:30-4:30 p.m.; Fox Sports 2; | 4:30-5:30 p.m.; Fox Sports 1 | 5:30-6 p.m.; Fox Sports 2

MEMORIAL TO CELEBRATE ‘DOC’ RICHARDSON SATURDAY 2-4 P.M. – A public memorial to celebrate the life of the late **Dr. J. David “Doc” Richardson** will be held Saturday (Oct. 2) at Churchill Downs.

Richardson, the distinguished Louisville surgeon who was an owner, breeder and widely-respected leader in the horse racing industry, died Sept. 7 in Saratoga Springs, N.Y. from complications due to a breakthrough COVID infection. He was 76.

The celebration will take place Saturday from 2-4 p.m. (all times Eastern) in the Starting Gate Suites 4th Floor. Guests should enter Churchill Downs via the Executive Gate, which is located next to the Kentucky Derby Museum near the Barbaro horse statue.

Saturday’s sixth race, which is scheduled to run at approximately 3:18 p.m., will be dedicated to “Doc” and the “J. David ‘Doc’ Richardson Celebration of Life” trophy will be presented to the winning connections.

For additional information, visit: [https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/louisville/name/james-richardson-
obituary?pid=200087583](https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/louisville/name/james-richardson-obituary?pid=200087583).

MANDATORY CLOSING DAY PAYOUT FOR DERBY CITY 6 – A lucrative total Derby City 6 pool could await bettors Sunday for closing day of Churchill Downs’ 12-day September Meet. There’s a \$59,784 jackpot carryover on Thursday (Races 3-8). The pool will be rewarding Sunday if there’s not a single winning ticket Thursday, Friday or Saturday.

The Derby City 6 jackpot pool only is paid if there is a single winning ticket. When multiple tickets contain six winners 90 percent of that day’s pool is paid out and 10 percent is added to the jackpot carryover.

Because Sunday is closing day, there will be a mandatory Derby City 6 payout with all monies distributed to ticket holders with the most winners in the six-race series. Sunday’s Derby City 6, which only costs 20 cents per combination, is scheduled to cover Races 5-10 starting at approximately 2:45 p.m. (all times Eastern).

Takeout on the Derby City 6 is just 15 percent, which is one of the lowest multi-race wager takeout rates in American racing.

Fans can wager on the Derby City 6 on track at Churchill Downs; www.TwinSpires.com, the track’s official online wagering platform; other online wagering outlets; and select satellite betting centers throughout North America.

DOWN THE STRETCH – The final Twilight Thursday presented by Blue Moon of the calendar year will kick off closing week of the September Meet. Thursday’s eight-race card had a first post of 5 p.m. and featured \$1 Blue Moon and select domestic beer, local food trucks and live music from **Roadie**. There was a \$59,784 carryover in the 20-cent Derby City 6 that spanned Races 3-8. ... Jockey **Mitchell Murrill** began serving a three-day suspension on Thursday. He’s scheduled to ride Sunday. ... Churchill Downs training hours will be from 5:30-9 a.m. Oct. 4-11 with one renovation break at 7 a.m. ... Sunday is **Law Enforcement Day** at Churchill Downs. Law enforcement officers will receive free general admission with a valid I.D. There are also discounted dining tickets available for officers. Those tickets can be purchased by calling the group sales office at 502-636-4450 or emailing groupsales@kyderby.com.

ABOUT CHURCHILL DOWNS RACETRACK

Churchill Downs Racetrack (“CDRT”), the world’s most legendary racetrack, has been the home of The Kentucky Derby, the longest continually held annual sporting event in the United States, since 1875. Located in Louisville, CDRT features a series of themed race days during Derby Week, including the Kentucky Oaks, and conducts Thoroughbred horse racing during three race meets in the Spring, September, and the Fall. CDRT is located on 175 acres and has a one-mile dirt track, a 7/8-mile turf track, a stabling area, and provides seating for approximately 60,000 guests. The saddling paddock and the stable area has barns sufficient to accommodate 1,400 horses and a 114-room dormitory for backstretch personnel. CDRT also has a year-round simulcast wagering facility. www.ChurchillDowns.com.

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